

CHOOSING ROADS
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Almost always, decisions we make involve choosing between a high road and a low road. The high road is doing what is right, though maybe not gratifying. The low road is what pleases us at the time, a selfish decision based on immediate gratification. A beautiful poem containing truth was once penned by Robert Frost. It went like this. "Two roads diverged in a yellow wood, And sorry I could not travel both, And be one traveler, long I stood, And looked down one as far as I could, To where it bent in the undergrowth; Then took the other, as just as fair, And having perhaps the better claim, Because it was grassy and wanted wear; Though as for that the passing there Had worn them really about the same, And both that morning equally lay, In leaves no step had trodden black. Oh, I kept the first for another day! Yet knowing how way leads on to way, I doubted if I should ever come back. I shall be telling this with a sigh, Somewhere ages and ages hence: Two roads diverged in a wood, and I— I took the one less traveled by, And that has made all the difference."

A beautiful book was once written that also contained Truth. In it, two roads are also discussed, a broad way leading to destruction and a narrow way leading to life everlasting. Only a few will choose to take the high road leading to heaven, but that choice will also make all the difference. In choosing our path, if **Matthew 12:30** can be believed, we also choose to work with God or against God.

Galatians 5:16-23 describes these two paths as walking in the Spirit versus walking in the flesh. Walking in the flesh results in; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, reveling, and such like. Any of these are sufficient to place us in hell for eternity. Walking in the Spirit, en route to Heaven, results in love, joy, peace, longsuffering, faith, gentleness, meekness, temperance and goodness. It sounds like an easy decision to make doesn't it? Especially when life itself bears witness to **Proverbs 13:15**, "Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors is hard."

God describes that choice of paths, and the consequences of choosing each, in unmistakable terms in His Word. **Isaiah 1:19-20** says if we are willing and obedient, we will eat the good of the land: we will live well and prosper. But if we refuse and rebel, we will be devoured with the sword; count on it. So why do we fall away and reap the pain from our errors? It is really simple. We begin by giving into the lusts of our flesh for the temporary gratification involved. It just does not stop there. James tells us in his fifth chapter that "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. "

There are vastly different rewards resulting from serving our flesh versus serving God. **Romans 6:23** names the result of sin as death. The **eighteenth chapter of Ezekial** describes it like this. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. ... But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." God's lack of pleasure in our death turns this passage from one of judgment to one of hope.

God undertakes to resolve what does not please Him. He came to give hope to those doomed to judgment and hell. Hear His love and grief for His people in **Luke 13:34** as He tries

unsuccessfully to shield them from consequences of their choices. He made His mission clear in **John 10:10**. He came to offer life instead of death. **2 Chronicles 7:14** describes how to switch roads if we want to change destinations. “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” Like a man of God in **Joshua 24:15**, God is asking us to choose. “And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” Or as Moses said in **Deuteronomy 30:19** “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:” These choices involved more than the listener.

Most will choose foolishly, but we cannot afford to. Our choice of a path will make a difference, but not only in our destination. It may also determine where our children might live forever.